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SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PBTS](#) [PHUM](#) [KWBG](#) [KPAL](#) [IS](#)
SUBJECT: IDF DEMOLISHES TWO WEST BANK HOUSES FOR LACK OF PERMITS

Classified By: Consul General Jake Walles for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (SBU) Summary. Palestinian contacts confirmed that the IDF demolished two Palestinian houses in Shuqba village, west of Ramallah, November 12, on the grounds that they lacked building permits. These are the first demolitions of permanent residential structures in the West Bank since the GoI committed in March 2008 not to demolish homes in Area C. End summary.

¶2. (SBU) Palestinian contacts confirmed press reporting that the IDF demolished two Palestinian houses in Shuqba village, west of Ramallah, November 12 for lack of building permits. Although most of Shuqba is in area B, the demolished houses were outside of the village plan, in area C. The demolitions displaced two families (nineteen adults and children). IDF soldiers also delivered demolition orders for five additional structures in the village, including a brick factory and animal pen. (Note: Shuqba is a relatively isolated village, several kilometers south of the settlement of Ofarim and north of Nili settlement. Route 446, used both by settlers and Palestinians, passes close to the village's eastern edge. End Note.)

¶3. (C) Village council member Bassem Shalash told Poloff November 13 that the demolished houses were built three and eight years ago, respectively. He said they were at the village's northern edge, but were not the closest houses to the road or settlement. He said the IDF had cited the lack of building permits as the basis for demolitions, but noted that the current master plan restricts the village's ability to expand legally.

¶4. (C) Comment. These demolitions represent a clear resumption of GoI demolition activity in the West Bank. Other demolitions by the IDF in recent weeks have been explained by the GoI as necessary for security and have targeted seasonal residences and non-residential structures. This week's home demolitions in Shuqba are the first demolitions of permanent residential structures, and the first ostensibly undertaken for lack of building permits, in the West Bank since the GoI committed in March 2008 not to execute demolitions in area C. End comment.

WALLES